

**Amendments to the Specification**

Please amend paragraph [0024] as follows:

An incident illumination system according to the existing art is shown in FIG. 2. Here, as compared to FIG. 1, several parts of the microtome are omitted in order to provide a more detailed view. The microtome comprises an incident illumination system 20 that does not serve to illuminate the working region; instead, the light is intended to be reflected from a water-filled collection pan 21 for sections in the direction of optical axis 13 of observation microscope 9. Incident illumination system 20 defines an illumination direction 25 that is directed toward collection pan 21. A water surface 22 forms in collection pan 21, and reflection occurs from it in as uniform a fashion as possible in order to allow clear recognition of the sections with their interference colors. From the interference colors that form, the user can estimate the thickness of the sections. To prevent water bridges between knife 7 and the preparation (not depicted here) during cutting, a slightly recessed water surface 22 is often used. In the exemplary embodiment depicted here, water surface 22 is curved. To ensure uniform reflection even with such surfaces, fluorescent lamps 23 equipped with a frosted glass disk 24 are used for incident illumination system 20. The requisite size and position of the light-emitting surface are determined by the geometry of curved water surface 22. The ~~heat~~ emission of heat from the illumination system is intended to be minimized~~as low as possible~~. Any heating of the preparation results in expansion and therefore in an increase in section thickness. The heat contributed by fluorescent lamps 23 also results in an unstable section thickness.